

Coop's Scoops #81 July 29, 2020

I had a great chin wag with some wise and funny women over at the gazebo in the park at noon today. We all bring chairs, social distance ourselves, and bring our own lunch and beverage.

The sun was shining. It is just so lovely to be able to be together outside with proper precautions. Here we are...

... YOU are invited to join in any Wednesday that it's not pouring down rain at 11:30 am 'til

around 1:pm. It's a way to gradually begin to gather again before our buildings re-open.



Barbara
Joyce
Jane
Noni

Gertrude
Judie
Margot
Lil



Condolences and Love:

All at St. Thomas send their love and prayers to Christine and Rick Lees on the passing of Christine's mother Hallie Thompson. Hallie attended St. Thomas for years, enjoying many friendships and blessing her church through working with the ACW, adding her charming presence to Sympathy Teas and doing alter linens for many of those years. She will be cremated and buried with Christine's father in Brighton, Ontario. Please keep Christine and Rick and all the family in your prayers at this time. May God grant them consolation and peace. " Rest eternal grant unto Hallie, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon her! "

News from the Diocese:

There will be a Zoom Meeting for all incumbents, Wardens and Treasurers on August 6th at 10am to consider the Amber Protocols (sort of like Stage 3 but for the church) just recently released. Please let Liz know that you will be attending

so the zoom information will be sent to you. Archdeacons Kelly Baetz and Jay Koyle will be facilitating the discussion with Archbishop +Anne hosting.

A little fun.....

Now that I've found the Family Circus website, I may get carried away with their cartoons.....if I do, you can let me know!



Every time I pass a church

I pay a little visit

So when at last I'm carried in,

The Lord won't say "Who is it?"

(this was found on a bookmark likely made for an ACW annual – maybe St. Thomas made it)

Jock, the painter, often would thin his paint so it would go further. So when the Church decided to do some deferred maintenance, Jock was able to put in the low bid, and got the job. As always, he thinned his paint way down with turpentine.

One day while he was up on the scaffolding -- the job almost finished -- he heard a horrendous clap of thunder, and the sky opened.

The downpour washed the thinned paint off the church and knocked Jock off his scaffold and onto the lawn among the gravestones and puddles of thinned and worthless paint.

Jock knew this was a warning from the Almighty, so he got on his knees and cried: "Oh, God! Forgive me! What should I do?"

And from the thunder, a mighty voice: "REPAINT! REPAINT! AND THIN NO MORE!"
Scripture



Scripture for Today: "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23.

Again in the Scripture we find wonderful promises about our God. The book of Lamentations is about exactly that – lamenting - People lamenting the hard, difficult, and unbearable things that life can bring our way. Lamenting means grieving. Pouring hearts out asking God to notice human distress and anguish and loss. Protesting, even... telling God that these horrible things that are happening are not tolerable, not right, not “fair”...

The book of Lamentations has five chapters, each essentially like a funeral service, where tears and grief are poured out without restraint. It is a venting of emotions, confusion, regret and suffering. And the inclusion of this book in Holy Scripture declares loudly that there is a sacred dignity to human suffering. We are not meant to suffer in silence. We are able to voice our distress without offending God in any way, and without offending each other either. There is room in the Church not only for psalms of praise, prayers for mercy, songs of joy or confession of sin....there also must be room for just saying it like it is and venting our frustrations with life, and indeed with God. After all, He already knows what is in our hearts.

The verse chosen for today’s little message also points out that neither we nor the people of God are to remain frozen and unyielding in our lamentations. There is one thing that is certain, unchangeable, present even when apparently missing...that is the LOVE OF GOD. We will never ourselves in the need of mercy that is NOT available. It never runs out. In fact, they are restocked every morning (unlike Lysol wipes!). God has promised and He will do it. No matter what it is or how long it takes. His faithful love is absolutely trustworthy.

So what were the people of Israel lamenting way back then? Well, the loss of everything they held dear. God had given them the land, God’s priests served in God’s temple, there was order and law in the land. UNTIL...King Nebachadnezzr II laid siege to the land in about 589, completing the ruination of the city, the

destruction of the Temple, the murder of scholars and priests and teachers and doctors and the capture of all the citizens carried off to Babylon.

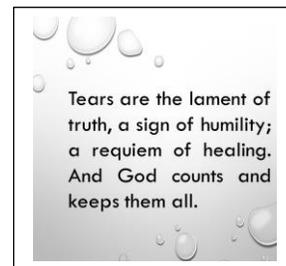
The tears were innumerable, the losses beyond human capacity, the fear and the confusion mentally and socially crippling...yet those hearts that loved God, and raged at God, and blamed God, and wondered if they even believed at all anymore...found their way to sing the songs of Zion in a new land. Found the temerity and boldness of believing in the face of all indications to the contrary that God's faithfulness remained. That His mercy remained. That His love remained. And in God's time, they were indeed vindicated. Jerusalem arose, the Temple rebuilt, the land growing crops once more. And then it all happened again in AD 70. And it was healed again. As Ecclesiastes says for everything, there is a season. And Psalm 56: 8 tells us

You keep track of all my sorrows.^[a]

You have collected all my tears in your bottle.

You have recorded each one in your book.

All of our laments, our griefs, are precious and valued by God.



We must never minimize suffering in word's alone, never judge harshly when people lose their way, never silence our own hearts...and we must also never let go of the promise that God is love and God will bring justice and mercy together with a kiss for every one of us. When we need help to hang on, we must count on each other. We all will need to be helped and need to be helpers. It is the human experience, and we are human. So was Jesus. He is even called the Son of Man, sitting in the Kingdom on the right hand of God the Father. (Mark 14:62) So.....what's all that mean? Covid is tough, things can be terribly wrong, suffering is painful, and yet God's love remains steadfast, immovable and full of mercy. Read Hebrews 11 to reflect more deeply on this...and I pray God will encourage and bless you in all facets of your being. Amen.

Judie+

Prayer: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so

that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. (2 Corinthians 1: 3-4)

A prayer sent in by Phil Gunyon, prayed by his great-grandmother Nita 117 years ago!

Nita's Prayer

Bristol Cathedral - Feb. 1st, 1903

Lord, for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray; help me, my God, from stain of sin,

Just for to-day.

Let me both diligently work and duly pray. Let me be kind in word and deed,

Just for to-day.

Let me be slow to do my will, prompt to obey; help me to mortify my flesh,

Just for to-day.

Let me no wrong or idle word unwillingly say. Set Thou a seal upon my lips,

Just for to~day.

Let me in season, Lord, be grave, in season gay; let me be faithful to Thy grace,

Just for to-day.

And if today my tide of life should ebb away, bid me, dear Lord, if I must,

Go home to-day.

So for to-morrow and its needs I do not pray; but keep me, guide me, love me,

Just for to-day.

Amen.

Blessing: May the Lord Jesus Christ equip us with spiritual joy, may his Spirit make us strong and tranquil in the truth of his promises. And may the blessing of the Lord be upon us abundantly. Amen.